	1	2
February, 96	294.7	315
March, 96	294.6	315
April, 96	301.0	320
May, 96	305.1 P	NA
June, 96	314.0 P	-

P = Provisional.

(c) Increase of 4.5% in the WPI between December 1995 to June 1995 is a modest increase. Part of this increase is seasonal in nature—especially in case of fruits and vegetables.

The inflation rate based on consumer price index also showed some deceleration from 9.7% in December 1995 to 9.3% in May 1996.

(d) The point to point annual inflation rate for each week during the past six months is shown below in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Point to point inflation rate

Week ending	index (1981-82 = 100)	inflation (%)
1	2	3
2.12.95	298.5	7.1
9.12.95	298.1	6.5
16.12.95	297.9	6.4
23.12.95	297.0	6.0
30.12.95	296.8	5.8
6.1.96	296.8	5.2
13.1.96	297.1	4.9
20.1.96	298.1	5.0
27.1.96	297.5	4.9
3.2.96	297.6	4.7
10.2.96	297.7	4.4
17.2.96	297.9	4.6
24.2.96	298.4	4.9
2.3.96	299.3	5.1
9.3.96	299.3	5.2
16.3.96	299.3	5.1
23.3.96	299.5	5.0
30.3.96	299.5	4.4
6.4.96	301.8	4.8
13.4.96	302.5	4.9
20.4.96	302.7	4.6
27.4.96	304.1	5.0
4.5.96	303.5	4.6
11.5.96	304.3 (P)	4.4
18.5.96	304.3 (P)	4.2
25.5.96	304.3 (P)	4.1
1.6.96	305.4 (P)	4.8
8.6.96	306.0 (P)	4.7
15.6.96	306.2 (P)	4.5
22.6.96	306.2 (P)	4.2
29.6.96	306.5 (P)	4.2

P = Provisional.

(e) There was no increase in the rate of inflation during the last six months. In fact there was a decleration in the inflation rate from 7.1% in the first week of December 1995 to 4.6% by the first week of May 1996.

(f) The important steps taken to contain inflation are:

(1) continuation of open market sale by FCI of rice and wheat.

(2) continuing OGL import policy for selected essential commodities such as sugar, edible oils, pulses and low fat milk powder at nil or reduced duty.

(3) import of edible oils on government account for supply through PDS.

(4) control of fiscal deficit in 1995-96 to 5.9% (RE) of GDP.

(5) containing monetary growth to 13 per cent in 1995-96 through a series of measures.

(6) maintaining a liberal import policy, combine with reduction in import duties, for most of the commodities.

[English]

Lower Excise on Higher Steel Production

1108. SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that though the country produced six lakh metric tonnes of stainless steel during 1995-96 it has received excise duty only for three lakh metric tonnes;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor;

(c) the action being initiated against the defaulting companies; and

(d) the actual losses incurred during the last three years due to evasion of excise by such companies year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (d). Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.